Knocking at the College Door

Projections of High School Graduates

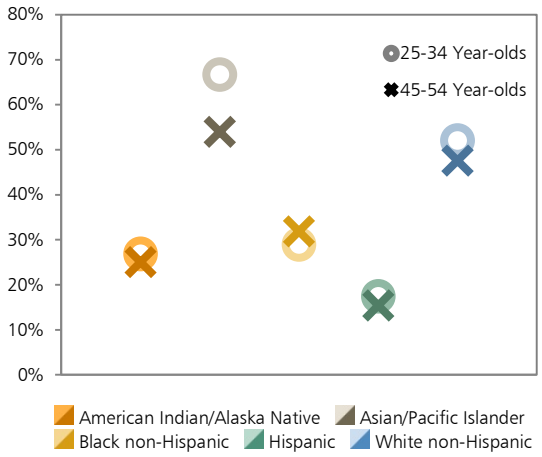
CALIFORNIA

National and regional trends mask important variation among states in the supply of high school graduates. This profile provides brief indicators for California related to: current levels of educational attainment, our projections of high school graduates into the future, and two common barriers to student access and success – insufficient academic preparation and inadequate finances.

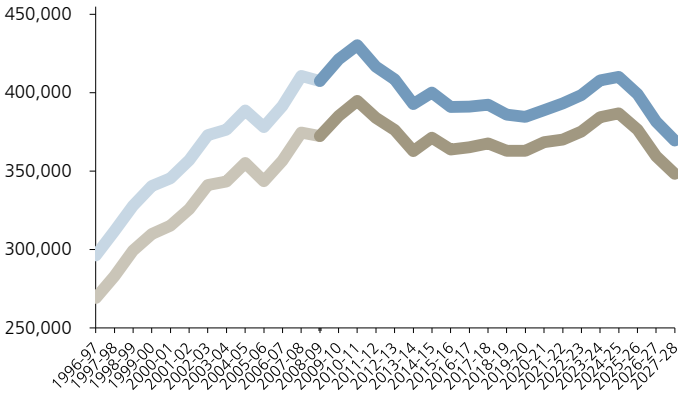
Educational Attainment by Race/Ethnicity[1]

Overall, about 38% of California's younger adults (aged 25-34) have at least an associate's degree, about the same proportion as the state's older working-age population (aged 45-54).

- Postsecondary degree attainment rates are up for younger populations of Asians/Pacific Islanders, White non-Hispanics, and Hispanics.
- Attainment rates are lower for younger Black non-Hispanics.
- Large gaps persist between the degree attainment rates for Asians/Pacific Islanders and White non-Hispanics and those for underrepresented populations, irrespective of age.
- Even with improvement in the Hispanic rate, those gaps are likely to grow as younger Asians/Pacific Islanders and White non-Hispanics outperform their elders by larger amounts than other racial/ethnic groups.
- About two-thirds of younger Asians/Pacific Islanders have achieved a postsecondary degree, compared with 52% for White non-Hispanics, 29% for Black non-Hispanics, 27% for American Indians/Alaska Natives, and 17% for Hispanics.



Production of High School Graduates

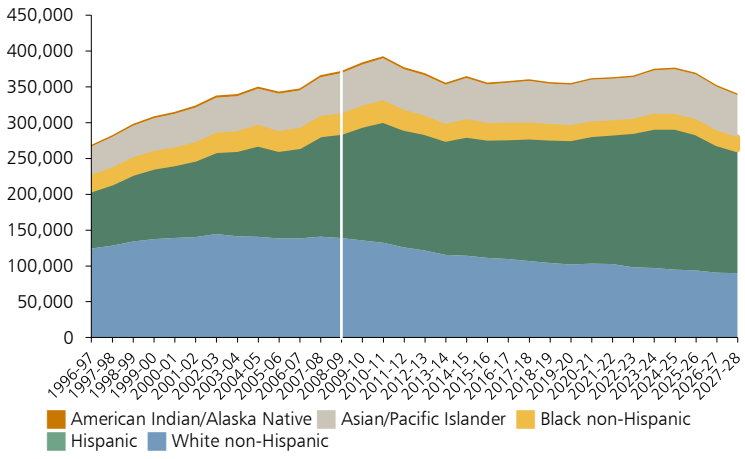


California has long been the demographic engine of the West and the nation, driving up numbers. Big changes are projected in the coming years, in which its supply of graduates will fall substantially.

- California's production of high school graduates peaked in 2010-11 at over 430,000, marking the end of an era of explosive growth from 1989-90 that added over 196,000 graduates (84%).
- In just three years between 2010-11 and 2013-14, production will fall by over 37,000 (a 9% decline), after which it will continue to decline, though inconsistently and at a more modest pace, through 2020-21.
- Nonpublic schools produced about 9% of the state's graduates in 2008-09. That share will dip to about 5% by 2020-21.
- California will lose the most graduates, in number, of any state over this timeframe.

Public High School Graduates by Race/Ethnicity

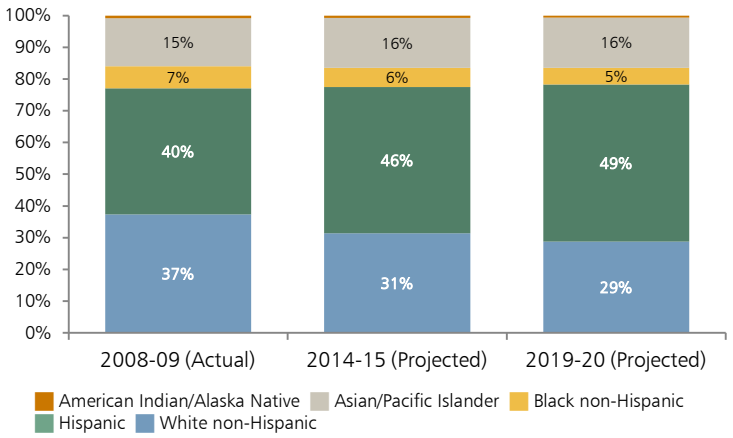
- The drop in overall production is driven by a precipitous projected decline in White non-Hispanics, whose numbers peaked in 2002-03. The drop steepens from the outset of the projections in 2008-09 to 2019-20, with a 27% loss of 37,000 graduates.
- Black non-Hispanic and American Indian/Alaska Native public high school graduates are projected to diminish at roughly equivalent rates as White non-Hispanics, though in substantially smaller numbers.
- Asians/Pacific Islanders will hold steady at between 54,000 and 58,000 graduates through 2022-23.
- Hispanic public high school graduates are the only racial/ethnic group projected to grow in meaningful numbers, up 28,000 by 2019-20 (19%).



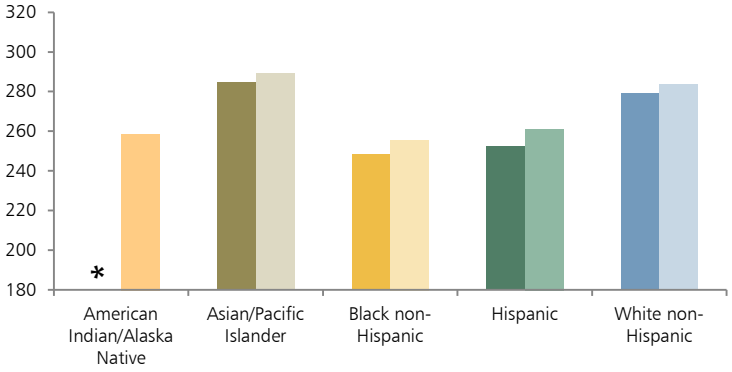
Composition of Public High School Graduates by Race/Ethnicity

California's public graduating classes have been majority-minority since 1992-93, reflecting its rapid and early diversification, a trend that is projected to accelerate in the years ahead.

- Hispanics overtook White non-Hispanics as the single largest race/ethnicity among graduates in 2007-08. By 2008-09, they outnumbered White non-Hispanics by nearly 9,000 graduates.
- By 2019-20, Hispanics will nearly be the majority group.
- The proportion of White non-Hispanics will fall 8 percentage points, to 29%, by 2019-20.
- Black non-Hispanics will also lose share, dropping 2 percentage points.



Composite Math and Reading Scores by Race/Ethnicity[2]



Note: California in darker shades; U.S. in lighter shades. *Reporting standards were not met and no score is available.

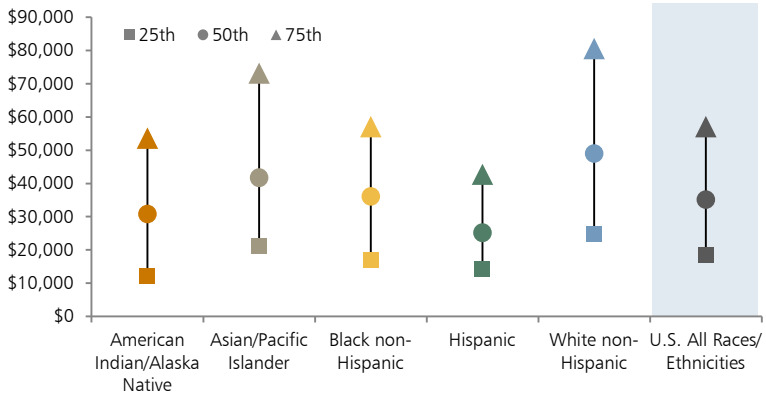
Academic preparation is a major factor in access to and success in college. One indicator of readiness comes from the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) math and reading scores for eighth graders in 2011.

- Black non-Hispanics and Hispanics scored lowest among all racial/ethnic groups with a composite score around 250.
- White non-Hispanics scored 279 and Asians/Pacific Islanders scored 284.
- Black non-Hispanics, Hispanics, and White non-Hispanics nationwide outperformed their counterparts in California.
- No data were available for American Indians/Alaska Natives at the state level.

Annual Income by Race/Ethnicity[3]

A second major barrier is access to the financial resources needed to pay for college. In California from 2006 to 2010 for the working-age population (age 25-64):

- The statewide median income was $37,126, compared with $35,147 for the nation.
- Hispanics were the least well off financially among all races/ethnicities: their median income was $25,191, two-thirds of the statewide median; three-quarters of Hispanics earned $42,768 or less; and one in four earned about $14,000 or less.
- American Indians/Alaska Natives earned a median income of $30,793, about 83% of the statewide median.



Projections of high school graduates are from WICHE, *Knocking at the College Door: Projections of High School* Graduates, 2012. 1996-97 to 2008-09 are actual reported graduates and 2009-10 to 2027-28 are projections. The National Center for Higher Education Management Systems supplied the data used in the first and last figures. State-level estimates for those figures are only reported for a racial/ethnic group when the coefficients of variation for all estimates do not exceed 25% and sample size is 50 or greater. Readers should understand that estimates for small samples can be imprecise due to large standard errors. WICHE provides relevant data tables at http://wiche.edu/knocking-8th/technicalNotes.

[1]*Source:* U.S. Census Bureau, 2008-10 American Community Survey (ACS) Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS) File. Average annual percent of population aged 25-34 and 45-54 with an Associate's degree or higher in 2008-10.

[2]*Source:* U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 2009 and 2011 Mathematics and Reading Assessments, generated using the NAEP Data Explorer. http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/naepdata/. *Notes*: Composite scores are the average of the Math and Reading scores for 8th graders tested in 2011, scale of 0 to 500; scores for 12th graders taking NAEP were not available for this state.

[3]*Source:* U.S. Census Bureau, 2006-10 American Community Survey Five-Year Public Use Microdata Sample File. *Note*: Percentiles for wage/salary income were calculated for persons age 25-64 with positive earnings; unemployed persons with $0 income were also included. Figures are in 2010 dollars. Native Hawaiians are included in Asian/Pacific Islander.

For more information email knocking@wiche.edu or contact Peace Bransberger, Research Analyst, 303.541.0257, pbransberger@wiche.edu, or Brian Prescott, Director of Policy Research, 303.541.0255, bprescott@wiche.edu.
Visit http://wiche.edu/knocking to obtain the full publication and download these projections as graphs or data files.